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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
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# Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Attorney General McGraw Takes Aim at Drunk Driving and Underage Drinking in Radio Campaign**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – West Virginia Attorney General Darrell McGraw today launched a campaign aimed at preventing drunk driving and underage drinking with new 30-second radio public service announcements set to air on stations throughout the state. The spots are timed to coincide with the back-to-school season and will air more than 2,000 times between now and October.

“The fact is, drunk-driving crashes are 100 percent preventable,” McGraw says. “This initiative reminds adults that we all play a part in preventing drunk driving and that one of the easiest and most effective ways to do that is by designating a driver. By doing so, West Virginians are joining the millions of adults nationwide who have been or have used a designated driver.”

The good news is that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) reports that West Virginia drunk-driving fatalities are down 19 percent since 2000 and 38 percent since 1982. McGraw also takes aim at underage drinking with two radio spots that remind parents about the importance of talking with their teenage and college-age children about underage and abusive drinking and, for parents with teens still at home, refusing to host underage parties with alcohol. According to a report from the National Academy of Sciences, two-thirds of teens who drink say they get alcohol from their parents or other adults. Further, a survey of teens conducted by the GfK Roper Youth Reports for more than a decade reveals the majority of teens (69 percent), ages 13 to 17, have consistently cited their parents as the No. 1 influence on their decisions to drink or not.

“With school back in session, now is the perfect time for parents to talk with their teens about drinking,” explains McGraw. “Parents have a tremendous influence on their teens’ decisions about whether or not to drink. By communicating openly and honestly, setting a good example, and not providing alcohol for their teens or their teens’ friends, parents play a critical role in preventing underage and abusive drinking among students.”

Recent government studies show that underage drinking continues to decline. According to the federal government’s 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 83 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds do not drink. And in West Virginia, the number is slightly higher, at 84 percent. Likewise, teen drunk-driving fatalities are down 67 percent nationwide and 70 percent statewide since 1982, according to the DOT.

The three radio spots, which are available for download at <http://www.wvago.gov/media.cfm>, will rotate in paid airings on radio stations across West Virginia throughout September and October.

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